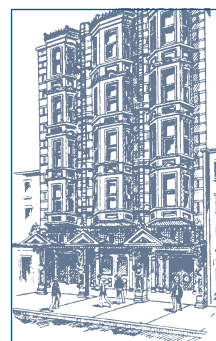


Decatur Street / Vieux Carre

HISTORY The area in this tour includes the river-most part of the Vieux Carre. The Vieux Carre is the original city founded by Jean Baptiste Lemoyne de Bienville in 1718. This tour starts at the lower end of the French Quarter, and proceeds along Decatur St. for almost all its length and includes the remains of the infamous Gallatin St. red light district, the former jazz nightclub area in the Ursuline Row buildings, and the French Market complex. It ends in the upper section of the French Quarter that became an adjunct to the Central Business District around 1900.



The Cosmopolitan

tour map

1. NEW ORLEANS JAZZ MUSEUM COLLECTION

400 Esplanade Ave. This Collection, originally at 1017 Duymaine St., is part of the Louisiana State Museum's permanent collection at the Old U. S. Mint. Instruments and artifacts of New Orleans jazz are displayed including two of Louis Armstrong's horns, Jack Laine's bass drum, Sidney Bechet's saxophone, Bix Beiderbecke's cornet and Irving Fazola's clarinet.

2. GALLATIN STREET (Now French Market Place)

Named after Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury under Jefferson and Madison, these two blocks are what remains of a four block area that extended to N. Peters St. The others were torn down in the 1930's for the farmer's market sheds. Gallatin St. (c.1840-1875) predated Storyville as one of the city's red light districts and is commemorated by cornetist Johnny Wigg's "Gallatin Street Grind." A rough area, it set the tone for the surrounding area for nearly a century.

3. SPARICIO'S SALOON 1136 Decatur St.

Johnny Sparicio was an early New Orleans violinist, music instructor, and bartender, and later a Milneburg dairy farmer, who was associated with bandleader Jack Laine and clarinetist Alcide "Yellow" Nunez. This was one of four bars operated by the Sparicios, and most likely the hangout for Laine and his musicians.

4. DECATUR STREET NIGHTCLUBS

Originally the fashionable Ursuline Row designed by Gurlie and Guillot c.1831, the Decatur St. nightclub area came about because of the French Market, the demise of the Gallatin St. district, the derelict nature of the lower French Quarter in the early 1900s, and the closeness to the wharves. By the 1930's the street had many bars and small dance halls with jazz bands. The clubs included Big Alcide Landry's, the Black Cat, Charlie Palooka's, Corinne's, the Filipino's, Heavey's Seventh Heaven, the Kingfish, Madame Rita's, Mama's, the Pigpen, the Popeye, Roma Cafe, the Rosebowl, and the Wonderbar.

5. THE POPEYE BEER PARLOR 1135 Decatur St.

The Popeye was one of the 1930's Decatur St. establishments that managed to last for almost a decade. Musicians who played here included Billie & Dee Dee Pierce, Wilbert Tillman, George Lewis, Harold Dejan, Ernie Cagnolatti, Kid Howard, Lionel Ferbos, and John Brunious.

6. THE KING FISH BEER PARLOR 1101 Decatur St.

This Italianate style building by architect Thomas Sully was built in 1884. The King Fish, probably known briefly as the Pig Pen, was another of the more long-lived clubs. Operated by Vincent Serio, Jr. and Arthur Schott, aka the King Fish, the musicians featured included George Lewis, Billie Pierce, Dee Dee Pierce, Burke Stevenson, and Smilin' Joe (Pleasant Joseph).

